

The Musical World.

(REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AS A NEWSPAPER.)

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VOL. 49—No. 14.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1871.

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CRYSTAL PALACE.—THIS DAY.—SATURDAY
CONCERT at 3.0.—Madame Joachim, Miss Sophie Loewe, Solo violoncello, Signor Piatelli. Conductor—Mr. MAW. Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony. Overtures, "PROMETHEUS" and "TANNHAUSEN."—Admission Half-a-Crown, or by Guinea Season Tickets. Stalls, Half-a-Crown.

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REMOVAL.

MADAME ARABELLA GODDARD begs to inform her Pupils and Friends that she has **REMOVED** from Upper Wimpole Street to Ivy Lodge, 49, Finchley Road, St. John's Wood.

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A HISTORY OF OPERA.

By C. SCHULZE.*

(Continued from page 188.)

Before proceeding to direct our attention to another genius, who, also, pursued his way on the mountain tops of art, let us cast a short glance upon some few of the wanderers in the valley below. The successes achieved by French comic opera and vaudeville, as well as by the *opera buffa* of the Italians, created a new counterweight, so to say, in the German *Liederspiel*, or operetta, in which the tone of national song, so captivating to German feeling, was adopted, and which, from that very fact, became a highly popular musical form. I will here mention Hiller of Leipzig, the real founder of operetta (died 1804), together with his librettist, Felix Weise. Hiller's songs have always a touch of something artistic about them, though they do not afford evidence of any very great imaginative powers. Then comes Reichardt (died 1814), for whom Goethe wrote *Erwin und Elvire*, *Jery und Bäteley*, an aesthetically accomplished musician, and a great admirer of Gluck's operas, the influence of which is unmistakable in his own operas of *Andromeda*, *Brennus*, and *Die Olympiade*. Ferdinand Kauer (died 1831), whose *Donauweibchen* was universally popular. Wenzel Müller (died 1836), whose *Alpenkönig*; *Verschwenker*; *Bauer als Millionär*; *Die Schwestern von Prag*; and *Das neue Sonntagskind*, find admirers even at the present day. In Raumann (died 1801), the folk's tone is combined with empty Italian musical phrases; he opera of *Cora* is considered his most famous work. The same combination is found in Salieri's two pupils, Winter (died 1825) and Weigl (died 1843). The first was known for his opera of *Das unterbrochene Opferfest*, and the second was a musical Gessner, that is, a composer of idylls, and father of the *Schweizerfamilie*. We find the folk's tone combined with a humorous representation of the actual life of the people in the works of Dittersdorf (died 1799), and of Schenck (died 1836). The latter gained innumerable friends by the low comedy of his *Dorfbabier*, which was performed 200 times in Vienna alone, and drew money everywhere. The former, an intimate friend of Gluck, proved himself a thoughtful and respectable composer, especially in *Hieronymus Knicker*; *Doctor und Apotheker*; and *Hokus Pokus*. It was he who prepared the way in Vienna for a greater genius than himself.

This genius was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (born 1756, died 1791). Thoroughly conversant with the formalism of Italian opera, he had the courage to step out of Gluck's mythico-heroic sphere into that of actual human life. The personages of his dramatic productions are not mere creations of the imagination, but human beings like ourselves; no bitter and obscure fatality guides them by a leading string; they themselves forge their own happiness and their own misfortune. Mozart paints, in tune, not only earnestness, dignity, and elevation, but also every affection that can be musically portrayed; even wit and humour are most amply represented in his operas. Opera as he wrote it must, therefore, be considered as the extension and perfection of opera as Gluck wrote it. In contradistinction to heroic opera, Mozart's style of opera is called romantic opera. With regard to its separate forms, it must be remarked of the overture that it excites in us exactly the kind of feeling which runs through the drama following it, and that it is instrumentally more important, and of a better articulated and more artistic form, than the overtures of any previous composer. The form occurs at a subsequent period independently still more perfect and truly classical in Beethoven, who, however, in his only opera, *Fidelio*, though it is instrumentally more important, has not surpassed the productions of Mozart. With Mozart, the recitative is not a mere accessory, or a mere poetical link; it serves him to portray and pave the way for psychological events. In the aria, where, it is true, he frequently made willingly, or was compelled to make, concessions to virtuosity, we find delicate characterization of the different personages. And how sensually sweet is his cantilena. The concerted pieces and the *finales*, sparsely represented in Gluck, skilfully combine all the various points of the action. On the whole, Mozart's operas, like all his com-

positions, are especially distinguished for originality, wit, fancy, and inexhaustible imaginative powers. Not one is like the other, and Mozart understood better than anybody else the art of uniting a contrapuntal style with expressive and pleasing melody. What a fine comic vein there is, too, in his operas! With what mastery does he employ the art of rhythm! He was, indeed, a reformer of comic opera. The Italian *opera buffa* dealt only with comic characters; Mozart's operas created comic situations, which could never have existed without sharply marked personages.

The influence exerted by Mozart and Gluck on the form and treatment of opera spread far, and thenceforth affected the national music of the Italians and French. We perceive it immediately, for instance, in Méhul (died 1818), whose *Ariodant*, *Hélène*; *Les deux Aveugles*; and *Joseph* are considered his best operas; the last is held in higher esteem at present in Germany than in France. In consequence of Méhul's endeavour to unite Gluck's style with the most commonplace operatic books, he could not possibly fail to be guilty of many a piece of bad taste and eccentricity. Mozart's influence is, however, even more directly apparent in Boieldieu (died 1834), the friend of Cherubini, and Rossini's rival in Paris. Everyone praises very justly the freshness and animation of his melodies; the simplicity of his harmony; the splendour and fire of his instrumentation. His operas: *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge*; *Ma Tante Aurore*; *Le Calife de Bagdad*; *Jean de Paris*; and *La Dame Blanche*, still enjoy a good repute in Germany. In France, however, they were quickly driven from the field by the "Swan of Pesaro."

We further find the influence of the hero Gluck exerted finally on Cherubini (died 1842) and Spontini (died 1851). Cherubini—in the cantilena, often an Italian; in grace and declamation, often a Frenchman—combines in his music earnestness and pithy brevity with fulness of harmony and delicate instrumentation, though he is not always free from heaviness, monotony, and oddity. His best work is *Les deux Journées*, the finale of the first act being especially good. Of his other operas, *Demophon* (1788); *Lodoiska* (1791); *Elisa* (1794); *Medea* (1797); and *Les Abencerrages*, are worthy of mention. Spontini, a master of rhythm and recitative, weaker in harmonized counterpoint, but strong in the employment of orchestral resources, did nothing really conducive to the further development of opera. After having, during the first period of his productivity, written only genuinely Italian operas, a performance in Paris of Gluck's *Iphigénie en Aulide* suddenly illuminated his mind. He resolved to illustrate musically historical subjects, adapted to the feeling excited by the political and warlike events of the period, and to transform Gluck's classic opera into heroic opera. Thus arose *La Vestale*, his best opera (1807); *Fernand Cortez*, ordered of him by Napoleon, in 1809; and *Olympia* (1816). His subsequent operas were *Nurmahal* (1821); the magic opera, *Alcidor* (1825); and *Agnes von Hohenstanfen* (1827). Writing to Goethe, Zelter says of *Alcidor*:—"Spontini seems to me like his own Gold-King, who flings gold at people's heads, in which he makes holes. What is intended to be melodious strikes one as an outline-drawing which is continually broken off, instead of being free and flowing, and which degenerates into caricature."

Shortly before the fall of Napoleon, French opera lost its charm and its reputation. Two new composers shared between them the latter: Paër (died 1839), who was appointed by Napoleon Spontini's successor in 1812, and Rossini (died 1868). Of Paër's numerous operas, I will mention merely *Camilla* (1799), which first established his reputation; *Sargino* (1803); *Sophonisba*; *Numa Pompilio*; and *La Griselda*. In all these works, we perceive a facile plastic talent, but little invention. All his melodies have well-known physiognomies, and frequently bear the stamp of Mozart. With him begins the Renaissance style, the melody being once more garnished with ornamentation as formerly. Greater than Paër, greater than any other Italian, stands Rossini; rich in melody; poor in harmonic invention; extremely simple in his instrumentation, nay, often too simple, since he seldom gives due prominence to the middle parts; but, on the other hand, frequently brilliant and clever. It is true that he generally fails in dramatic truth, and half his operas are genuine dance music. The Italians called him their romanticist, a name which he gained, probably, among them on

* From the Berlin Echo.

account of his modulatory leaps, his crescendos, his triplet passages, cadences, flourishes, duets in thirds, and the big drum. In his twenty-first year, he wrote *Tancredi*, and before he was thirty he had composed thirty operas, of which *L'italiana in Algeri* (1813); *Otello* (1816); *Semiramide* (1822); and *Guillaume Tell* (1827), are the best known. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) is, however, the most important of all his works.

Bellini (died 1835), and Donizetti (died 1843), were contemporaries and fellow-countrymen of Rossini. While Rossini, thanks to his brilliant colouring and his cantilena, always produced works of art, we see, in the two former-named masters Italian opera become utterly shallow. Their melodies, though sensually pleasing, are by far less noble, and flow far less from the heart than those of Rossini. Donizetti places the centre of gravity not in the drama, properly so-called, but in the *bravura* air of the singer. Breakneck cadences, and physical exertion on the part of the vocal virtuosos, at the end of the different scenes and acts, have to conquer the hearts of the auditory, and they conquer them in, among many other operas, *Anna Bolena* (1831); *L'Elisir d'Amore* (1832); *Lucrezia Borgia* (1834); and *La Fille du Régiment* (1848); nay, more, they conquered—let the reader hear and wonder—in *Anna Bolena*, the professorship of counterpoint at the Conservatory of Naples for their composer.

Bellini, though entitled by his innate melody to a higher position, resembles Donizetti in his passion for dazzling and captivating his hearers through the performances of solo virtuosos, having written *Il Pirata* with a special eye to Rubini, and several parts with the same consideration for Madame Pasta. Anything like the portrayal of individual character is out of the question, but his music is never false to the tone of sentimentality. Madness and the voluptuousness of pain are the subjects for his talent. Well, the masses like this sort of thing, and even at the present day there is a large public who admire *I Montecchi e Capuletti* (1829); *La Sonnambula* (1831); *Norma* (1832); and *I Puritani* (1834).

In Auber, the pupil of Cherubini and Boieldieu, we already perceive the influence of these neo-Italians on French opera; the same brilliant instrumentation; the same fiery rhythms; and the same decked-out melody. But it must be confessed that Auber has frequently attached importance to genuine dramatic expression. It is this very fact which subsequently rendered him a dangerous rival of Italian opera. The most valuable, in form and purport, of his operatic works is *La Muette de Portici*, which achieved an unexampled success in Berlin and Brussels. In most of his other known operas: *La Neige*, *Le Maçon*, *Fra Diavolo*, *La Fiancée*, *Le Philtre*, and *Le Lac des Fées*, for the majority of which Scribe furnished librettos, piquant, original melodies, orchestral experience, and a knowledge of the stage, cannot make up for the want of dramatic unity and treatment, and of the genuine employment of music.

In the first rank I place the illustrious names of the Abbé Vogler's two great pupils: Carl Maria von Weber, 1786-1826, for whom song, and Meyer Beer, 1791-1864, for whom the orchestra, was more important than aught else.

Let people say what they will, Carl Maria von Weber is, after Gluck and Mozart, the most important of all operatic composers. In whom else do we find such natural truth, such characteristic fidelity with regard to time, plot, and personages; such fulness of thought; such an inward, graceful charm, and frequently so national a stamp of stately melodies and moving harmonies, such simplicity, side by side with fiery fancy; and such instrumentation, never overloaded, and always elegant! It is the fact of satisfying equally the physical and psychological requirements of his hearers which is the secret means whereby Weber gained the name of a conqueror, and still maintains it at the present day. His operas are universally known and popular. His *Freischütz* especially has penetrated further and achieved a greater success than any other opera. That genuinely artistic work, *Euryanthe*; *Oberon*, with its ever-green overture; and *Preciosa*, rich in beautiful choruses, I must particularly mention. *Der Freischütz*, *Oberon*, and *Euryanthe*, must be designated, in every respect, truly classical romantic operas; they represent admirably three principal subjects of romance: the saga, the legend, and chivalry.

(To be continued.)

AMATEUR ACTORS AND READERS.

Of all the arts two alone seem to commend themselves to amateurs as conquerable without difficulty and almost without exertion. These are poetry and acting. No sane man believes he can become a painter, a sculptor, or a musician, without going through a long and arduous course of preliminary study. The most ambitious amateur would as soon think of commencing the construction of a floating battery as of undertaking, without preparatory instruction, to chisel a bust or to compose a symphony. But hundreds or thousands of men, not obviously insane on all the points, think they can write poems or sustain characters on the stage. A simple power to measure prose into given lengths—a faculty to be expected from a draper's assistant—and a knowledge that dove rhymes with love, and mountains with fountains, is considered stock-in-trade wherewith to set up as a poet; and even less capital will suffice for the man who resolves to be an actor. It is in vain to urge that to write a great poem is one of the highest triumphs of human intellect, and that to enact satisfactorily a difficult part is the result of enduring study, backed up by high powers of perception. One man in every twenty people who have received elementary education thinks himself a poet; and one man in every ten knows himself an actor. We are not about to condemn amateur acting as a whole. Something may, undoubtedly, be urged in its favour. It is, under many circumstances, a harmless, if not very intellectual, amusement. Nothing is more natural than that people should amuse themselves in private by giving representations of well-known pieces. Such acting is, in fact, a mere elaboration of the system of performing charades, which has long prevailed in English society. It affords a large amount of amusement, offers scope for unlimited flirtation, and does no particular harm beyond fostering foolish young people into a belief in their own talents, very comforting for the time, but apt to render them peculiarly susceptible to the shocks they are certain, ere long, to receive. When amateur acting becomes public, regards itself as entitled to demand payment for the right to witness it, and challenges criticism to report upon it, a different verdict is incurred. It is then a little of an absurdity and a good deal of a nuisance. So sensible of this are amateurs that they seldom or never dare to rest their claims to support upon their own merits. Most frequently they advertise their performances as being for the benefit of certain charities, and invite the public for the sake of furthering a useful object to pay money to see what is not worth seeing. The redeeming point is that the outside public is not reached. As a rule the patrons of these entertainments are the sisters, cousins, and friends of the performers, whose interest scarcely extends to the performance as a whole, but confines itself to the manner in which Tom or Fred acquits himself. Now and then when some person of unusual mark in society stops to bid for public applause, the flunkeyism of a section of English society reveals itself, and people pay their money to see a live marchioness, or to listen to the son of a duke. The percentage of those whom amateur performances lead to adopt the stage as a profession is not sufficiently great to make amends for all the inconveniences and absurdities with which such acting abounds.

We do not wish, however, absolutely to raise a standard of opposition to amateur acting, or to discourage all those taking part in it. We would not altogether discourage any movement which keeps alive an interest in theatrical affairs, and which may possibly some day reveal to us a good actor. But against some pretensions of amateur acting we do distinctly array ourselves, and our particular hostility is directed against the claim to criticism which, with augmenting zeal, is constantly being urged. Wherever a dramatic performance is given by the "Islington Incompetents" or the "Dulwich Duffers," whether at a central spot like the St. James's Hall, or the Gallery of Illustration, or at some obscure place of entertainment discoverable only by the aid of a directory, the overworked critic of a theatrical newspaper is invited to attend. Here perhaps the reader thinks he has obtained an explanation of the bilious tone of the present article. We frankly admit it. To report upon the Shallow of Mr. Phelps, who for a lifetime has made that part a study, to discuss the merits and defects from the standpoint of art of the last new comedy by Mr. Robertson, or the popular drama by Boucicault, is a task a man of intellectual tastes and aspirations may undertake. It is otherwise, however, with a second-hand performance by boys, of a piece with which the critic is already familiar. The utmost notice a performance of this could, under any possible conditions, require is an announcement that it was given, accompanied by a statement as to attendance and like matters. But our ambitious youths are not content with this. They wish to have the full judgment of a man paid for assumed competence in art, upon the manner in which they can grimace in imitation of the best known actors of the day. For your amateur seldom goes beyond imitation, and the most loudly applauded impersonations we have seen have been always caricatures of Mr. Buckstone or Mr. Toole in their more popular parts.

Against the assumption that such exhibitions are fit subject for criticism we indignantly protest. Of late, moreover, a new class of aspirants after theatrical or quasi-theatrical honours have presented

themselves. These are the so-called dramatic readers. Scarcely a week passes in which some new and altogether unknown man does not come forward and ask people to pay money to hear him read selections from the dramatists and poets. Now, an invitation of this kind appalls us by its impudence. That some master of stage delivery, a Mrs. Kemble, or a Miss Glyn, should read an entire play of Shakspeare, is conceivable enough. Under such conditions, we get what we are not likely to get on the stage—an intellectual exposition of every character in a great drama. Such readings cannot ever stand in the place of dramatic representations. To those, however, who from prejudice, or from any other cause, do not visit theatres, they give such a revelation of the significance of some of the grandest works of human genius as can rarely be obtained in the closet. They have other advantages, too; for the actress who cannot in consequence of the growing distaste to tragedy find an opportunity of appearing on the stage may keep acquainted with her conception of certain characters a public which otherwise would have no knowledge of them. Another class of readers, too, has a *raison d'être*. Authors who have attained sufficient eminence to inspire people with a lively interest concerning their personality confer a kindness on thousands when they read passages from their own works, or from the works of others. Thackeray as a lecturer, Dickens as a reader, are two of the most nobly conspicuous figures of modern times. But what earthly purpose is served when Mr. Septimus Spoonbill comes forward and gives his readings from the poets? Penny readings may form in a very remote country village, where everybody is known to everybody else, and where other entertainments do not extend beyond tea parties and scandal—a possible though scarcely a very hilarious form of entertainment. But your London reader does not aspire to open the minds of his next door neighbours, the wives and daughters of the tradespeople, and his father's "domestics." He aims at a cultivated and aristocratic patronage. A public room is taken, sofa stalls are advertised at three, five, or ten shillings each, and carriages are instructed to come at ten. This time not only the critics of the theatrical press are invited to attend, but those of all the literary and even of the political journals, daily or weekly, are summoned, and all available sources of interest are set at work to get at some unfortunate writer and compel him to reward an evening's penance by a favourable notice. Of the many forms which human vanity takes when it airs itself none seems much more pitiful than this. None at least comes home more directly to the critics. The public has no interest in Mr. Spoonbill's reading. Rarely, indeed, is talent manifested sufficient to justify a man in coming before it, and it very properly regards such things with complete indifference. To the professed critic these things are nothing short of a calamity. A man over-worked already is induced by some appeal of personal friendship to sacrifice an evening from the rest or the study he needs and craves, in almost equal degree, to hear a reading that wearies him, and could be surpassed easily in merit by his own children. He does this for no remuneration, but solely to write a gratuitous notice, to fill up a portion of a paper which could scarcely be worse occupied, and will interest no one in the world except the reader himself and his immediate surroundings. Such a system is thoroughly rotten. "Oh, reform it altogether." J. K.

PROVINCIAL.

EDINBURGH.—A writer in the *Scotsman* says:—

"An open lecture was delivered by Professor Oakeley, in the Music Class-room of the University, on Saturday afternoon, on the 'English Glee,' with illustrations. The following illustrations were given, as at previous lectures, by some members of the Choral Union Society and of the choir of 'St. Paul's,' York Place, under the direction of Mr. Adam Hamilton:—'Hark! the lark at Heaven's gate sings,' composed by Dr. Cooke, about 1755; 'Here in cool grot,' Lord Mornington, 1760; 'Amidst the Myrtles,' Battishill, 1765; 'When winds breathe soft,' Webbe, 1770; 'Ye spotted snakes,' Stevens, 1800; and, lastly, 'Blow, gentle gales,' Sir Henry Bishop, 1816. A sketch of each of these composers' lives and works was given, and especial allusion was made to Sir H. Bishop, some time Professor of Music in the University of Edinburgh, who occupied the Chair of Music at Oxford from 1848 to the year of his death, 1855. At the close of the lecture the thanks of those present were claimed and acknowledged for singers and conductor, and the desirability of the formation of madrigal and glee clubs in Edinburgh was strongly advocated."

HAMBURG.—It appears probable that, after having been announced for months, Herr R. Wagner's *Meistersinger* will not be produced, Herr Ucko, the tenor, not relishing the idea of playing for half salary, all the manager is at present in a position to offer. Herr Ucko leaves, therefore, and without him *Die Meistersinger* becomes an impossibility, unless Herr Nachbaur, of Munich, can be prevailed upon to accept a lengthened starring engagement, which is not very likely.

THE ACOUSTICS OF THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL.

To the Editor of the "Times."

SIR,—I trust that the interest which the musical world has shown in the success of the Royal Albert Hall will be a sufficient excuse for my venturing to ask the insertion in the *Times* of a few remarks on the phenomena observed at the opening ceremony as to the presence or absence of echo in this or that part of the building—phenomena which have occasioned assertions as divergent as those which led to the encounter between the two dogmatic knights who fought over the colour of a shield. One heard an echo from the Prince of Wales's voice, and another, merely a few feet off, was charmed with the clear intonation of every syllable which his Royal Highness uttered; and, as it happened, most of the reporters for the London Press were among those who heard the echo.

A word of explanation will make the whole matter clear as the cause of the quarrel of the knights. I had trusted too much to the destruction of appreciable echo from the roof by the divergence of the reflex waves thrown back from the velarium beneath it, and given too little weight to the effect of the convergence of the reflex waves from the glass itself. In other words, I believed that the velarium would stop or disperse more of the sound than it does, and when I discovered my error it was too late to commence its rectification. I had forgotten, too, that the Prince would occupy, when speaking, a more central position than that of the orchestra, and that thus the echo would be intensified for those seated at an equal distance from the centre, but on the other side of it. The principles of acoustics, like the principles of strategy and tactics, are in themselves not difficult to understand, but their application in practice is quite another affair. Mine, however, is a battle which can be fought again with the mistakes rectified, and I fully expect that on the occasion of the ceremonial on the 1st of May the small part of the arena and the amphitheatre in which an echo was heard yesterday will be pronounced as satisfactory as the other parts of the building.

I wish to add one word on another point. Some think the building would be unsuitable for chamber music. It was proved some time since by a dramatic author, in the columns of a very influential journal, that the hall would be too large for the human voice to fill. He is probably now convinced of the fallacy of his reasonings; and I too sanguine in supposing it possible that, by a different disposition of the performers with respect to the audience, the building may be proved to be as suitable for chamber music as for choral effects? At all events I am not unreasonable in asking those whose opinions are of weight to suspend their judgment for a time.

Only those who are in the habit of questioning nature experimentally know how often patient, tentative efforts are crowned by her with success. From such persons I have found no discouragement in carrying out my task. If they entertained doubts they were not expressed. I should have sent this letter to you yesterday, but I wished to send with it the enclosed letter of congratulation from Professor Tyndall, and I had, of course, to obtain his consent to my doing so.—I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY Y. D. SCOTT,

Lieut.-Col. R.E., Secretary to Provisional Committee and Director of Works.

March 31.

"Royal Institution, March 29.

"MY DEAR COLONEL SCOTT,—I think you are to be congratulated on the success, from an acoustic point of view, of the vast edifice opened to-day. I was placed in the lower tier of boxes at the end of the long diameter of the oval, opposite to the organ, and I heard there the singing and the music with admirable clearness. I happened also to go up to the Picture Gallery in search of some friends, and there also the effect seemed exceedingly good. When, some months ago, I heard you say that the hall might be employed for the purposes of oratory, I confess I felt incredulous. But the very distinct reading of the Prince of Wales to-day banished my incredulity. Had he faced the audience, and put on a little more steam, of which he had lots in reserve, he would have been better heard by an audience of 8,000 people than I could make myself heard some time ago by an audience numbering little more than 2,000 in the Philharmonic Hall at Liverpool. How the great hall is to be employed I don't know, but as far as its acoustic properties are concerned, I think you have demonstrated that it may be made entirely successful. Faithfully yours,

JOHN TYNDALL.

"Lieut.-Colonel Scott, R.E."

BREAKFAST.—EPPS'S COCOA.—GRATEFUL AND COMFORTING.—The very agreeable character of this preparation has rendered it a general favourite.—The *Civil Service Gazette* remarks:—"By a thorough knowledge of the natural laws which govern the operations of digestion and nutrition, and by a careful application of the fine properties of well-selected cocoa, Mr. Epps has provided our breakfast tables with a delicately flavoured beverage which may save us many heavy doctors' bills." Each packet is labelled: JAMES EPPS & CO., HOMEOPATHIC CHEMISTS, LONDON. Also makers of Epps's Cacaoine, a very thin evening beverage.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

The opera on Thursday night week was *La Traviata*, which, though a work of unequal merit, contains some of Signor Verdi's best dramatic music. The first act, from the duet, with chorus, "Libiam ne' lieti calici," to the soliloquy of Violetta, "Ah forse e lui," with its brilliant sequel, "Sempre libera," is brimful of animation; the whole scene in the drawing-rooms of Flora Bervoix (Act 2), including the gambling, the insult offered by Alfred Germont to Violetta, and Violetta's consequent despair, is in its way a masterpiece. The third act, although comprising many beauties, is, perhaps, not equal to the situation; nevertheless, it has moments of pathos which are undeniable, and cannot fail to enlist sympathy. Merits and demerits, however, taken into consideration, the *Traviata*, while the story may displease and its tendency be justly arraigned, has, thanks to the genius of the Italian composer, taken root. That so much attractive music should have been allied to so questionable a libretto is certainly to be regretted; but the fact of the popularity of *La Traviata* cannot be denied. Produced in 1856, with Mdlle. Piccolomini as Violetta, it created a "furore;" almost every great *prima donna*, from Bosio to Adelina Patti and Christine Nilsson, has essayed the part of the heroine with more or less success; and now, in 1871, the opera is still brought forward as an admitted requirement of the season. All this, we must persist in saying, is due to the music of Verdi, and not to the morbid interest excited by a revolting story.

There is little to be recorded about the performance, which, while in many respects good, was not altogether first-rate. That Violetta Valery is Mdlle. Sessi's best part seems to be a very general opinion. It lies more easily within her resources than the simple and yet elevated personage of Lucia, which she assumed on the opening night of the season. She enters thoroughly into the spirit of the character, and understands as thoroughly the situations out of which its various phases are evolved. The music, too, suits the capabilities of her voice, as well as her peculiar means of expression. Thus, if by no means a performance of the highest class, Mdlle. Sessi's Violetta can hardly fail to win sympathy of a certain kind. Her most striking vocal displays were "Sempre libera"—the florid *cabaletta* upon which the curtain falls in Act 1; the duet in Act 2, when Germont the Elder, with the earnest eloquence of a father disturbed in his calculations as to the advantages to be derived from his son's marriage to a lady of competence, induces Violetta to renounce Germont the Younger; and the soliloquy before the looking-glass, "Addio del passato," where the poor abandoned creature takes a despairful last glance at the happiness of which she had once dreamed, but which it is not her destiny to realize. In "Parigi o cara"—the well-known duet with Alfredo, who, hearing that Violetta cannot outlive the day, comes to console her with a vision of future happiness, which he, no less than she, must know to be impossible—the accustomed effect was produced, and the first movement was encoired. Into all this Mdlle. Sessi threw real earnestness, which is the more worthy notice inasmuch as she by no means generally shines as an actress.

The Alfredo of the evening was Signor Urio; and, Signor Cotti being still unhappily indisposed, Signor Rocca, from the Italian Opera Buffa, played the part of the elder Germont. Signor Vianesi was again conductor.

Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* was given on Saturday night, in presence of a brilliant audience, including the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the Princess Louise and Lord Lorne. The performance was by many degrees the best of the week. The gorgeous and picturesque choruses in which this magnificent opera is so rich, and more especially the grandest of all, "Giuriam, giuriamo," terminating with the unanimous cry, "All' armi," in the scene of the meeting of the Cantons, were, on the whole, extremely well given. Music so impressive, so admirably in keeping with the situation, and so exciting, can never fail to stir up the enthusiasm of an audience musically inclined; and such an audience is almost always drawn to the theatre when *Guillaume Tell*, the masterpiece of one of the most gifted of all composers, is announced. The orchestra, too, except in the overture, which, notwithstanding the encore awarded to the last movement, was a somewhat tame performance, did its duty well. The curtailments of the score, however much to be regretted, are inevitable in an opera-

house where the curtain does not rise till half-past eight o'clock. Nevertheless, we must persist in asseverating that it would be much better to omit entire pieces, as was done on Saturday with the *Pas de Six*, in Act 1, the *Pas de Solists*, in Act 2, and several other pieces, than to mutilate them, as in the instance of "Cinto il crine," the chorus, accompanied by dancing, which immediately succeeds the prayer, "Ciel, che del mondo," and is hardly less beautiful than the prayer itself. The substitution in the last act of the Hymn of Thanksgiving, with which the opera originally ended, for the military *finale* made out of the overture by a Florentine *chef d'orchestre*, and since adopted at our London performances, is a decided improvement, although the act itself is still so much curtailed that it is not easy to follow either the dramatic purport or the musical development.

The three chief characters in the opera were as competently sustained as, in the present day, by any combination of circumstances they well could be. It was a real pleasure to welcome back Madame Miolan-Carvalho, and to hear the music allotted to Mathilde sung with such exquisite purity and finish. The melodious and expressive air in the second act, "Selva opaca," in which Mathilde pensively soliloquizes, while awaiting the coming of Arnold, was in every sense perfect, and rounded off with a cadence in such unquestionable taste that Rossini himself would scarcely have declined to accept it as an integral part of his score. Not less excellent was Madame Carvalho in the succeeding duet with Arnold. Her rendering of one passage in this—"Posso amarlo!" &c. (an "aside," which this lady, like a real artist, knows how to convey)—was beyond praise. Signor Mongini is well suited in the trying music of Arnold, which, if he could only manage to husband his resources, he would declaim and sing to the very end just as successfully as he does at the beginning. This gentleman, with his powerful voice and now unrivalled means, will not take into consideration that there is such a phenomenon as "anti-climax." From the very commencement, as in the soliloquy, Act 1 ("Il mio giuro"), he puts forth all his power. In the duet with Guillaume Tell, "Non fuggire" (more familiarly known as "Dove vai"), he phrases certain passages nobly; but in others, as for example, "Ah, Mathilde," he makes the same mistake as Herr Wachtel used to do, and those who, in order to exhibit power of voice, pay no attention to the dramatic situation. It cannot be too often insisted upon that while Tell is endeavouring by urgent argument to impress upon Arnold's mind the duties of a patriot, the thoughts of Arnold suddenly revert to his love for Gessler's sister, and that Arnold's momentary speculations on this theme are by no means intended for the ear of his companion. How well M. Faure understands this is shown by the subdued manner in which he conveys his "aside," when Tell, observing Arnold's hesitation, comments upon it after his own fashion, and discloses to the audience what is clearly not meant for the ear of Arnold himself. Beyond this we have nothing to say in disfavour of the singing of "Dove vai," which was throughout of the most vigorous and emphatic character. To the still greater trio for Arnold, Tell, and Walter (Signor Bagagiolo), in the second act, similar criticism, in a modified degree, applies. Signor Mongini shows himself over-anxious to make "points" (as in the passage "Al campo solo") at the expense of his fellows, although in the first movement of the trio the importance of the three singers is in all respects equal. This, and more, would have been amply redeemed, however, by Signor Mongini's forcible delivery of the exclamation "Ah che santo!" and its admirably pathetic sequel:—

"Troncar snoi di
Quell' empio ardiva,"

when Arnold, informed of his father's murder at the hands of Gessler gives vent to an agony of despair. This won loud and well-merited applause, and may be set down as the culminating effect of the trio; for in the spirited last movement, where the climax ought properly to come, the great tenor was no longer completely master of his resources. To the air of the last scene the same criticism applies. Signor Mongini exhausted his powers in his somewhat overstrained enunciation of the opening movement, "O muto asilo," the consequence of which was that for "Corriamo, voliam" ("Suivez-moi") he had no power left, and this famous martial apostrophe passed off with scarcely a recognition. There was, at the same time, quite sufficient in Signor Mongini's

performance on Saturday night to entitle us to record it as a legitimate success. Many such successes have been earned by this gentleman since his first appearance among us, some 12 years ago, as Elvino, in the *Sonnambula* (with Mdle. Victoire Balfe as Amina); but what we should like to have to record for once in a way is a performance equal from first to last—such, in short, as we have a fair right to expect from an artist so exceptionally endowed.

M. Faure's *Guillaume Tell* is a striking impersonation from beginning to end. Here we have a genuine artist, who, without a tithe of the physical resources possessed by Signor Mongini, makes such excellent use of those at his command that he is enabled to present us with a well-balanced whole, against which, putting hypercriticism aside, little or no exception can reasonably be urged. As a display of histrionic art, involving a deep insight into the character to be portrayed, and a thorough ability to realize it, M. Faure's *Tell* is by far the best we have since the *Tell* of Ronconi—and with this advantage, that whereas the music was nearly everywhere too low for the Italian, it lies almost always easily for the voice of the Frenchman. There is something in M. Faure's presence on the stage which at once proclaims the genuine dramatic artist. Rossini has not allowed his hero many opportunities of shining alone; but he has found him one at least, which, for the singer who has the capacity and the will to seize it, is supreme. We mean, of course, the pathetic admonition to Jemmy, immediately before, at Gessler's cruel mandate, *Tell* is about to shoot, with his crossbow, the apple from the head of his son. Nothing could have been more touching than the feeling which M. Faure threw into this wonderfully expressive solo; and every connoisseur in the house must have pronounced it the finest singing of the evening. M. Faure was, moreover, the life and soul of the duet with Arnold; of the trio with Arnold and Walter; of the grand scene of the swearing of the Cantons; and, indeed, wherever else the *Liberator* of Switzerland is at all conspicuous.

Signor Baggiolo's superb bass voice was heard to eminent advantage in the trio to which reference has been made, and scarcely less so in the second *finale*. Mdle. Madigan is one of the best representatives of Jemmy (*Tell's* son) we have seen; and Mr. Wilford Morgan gave the air of the Fisherman, the charming episode in the introduction to Act 1—an introduction for the suavity of its melody, the richness of its harmony, and the wonderful application of what for a better expression we must term local colouring, never surpassed. The ballet was about the poorest we can remember in *Guillaume Tell* at the Royal Italian Opera; but, as so little of the delicious ballet-music was preserved, it, perhaps, mattered not greatly how it was done. The scenery was as usual—Mr. Beverley's charming "tableau" of the Lake of the four Cantons still, *mirabile dictu*, preserving its freshness, and being as pleasant as ever to look upon.

The opera on Tuesday night was *La Figlia del Reggimento*, with Mdle. Sessi; *Guillaume Tell* was repeated on Thursday; and *Faust e Margherita*, for the first appearance of Mdle. Pauline Lucca, is promised for this evening.

GOOD FRIDAY PERFORMANCES.—The Crystal Palace announced a grand sacred concert for Good Friday, at which Mesdames Rudersdorff, Lemmens-Sherrington, Drasdil, Messrs. Sims Reeves, Foli, Patey Harper, &c., assisted. At St. James's Hall, Mr. John Boosey gave an afternoon concert of sacred music, and another concert of sacred music was given in the evening. At several of the theatres sacred music was performed. At the Standard, selections, under the direction of Mr. Isaacson, from the *Messiah*, *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Athalie* were given. At the Britannia selections from the *Messiah*, *Stabat Mater*, *Elijah*, and the *Creation* formed the principal feature. A grand concert of sacred music, consisting of selections from the *Messiah*, *Elijah*, *Stabat Mater*, &c., was given in the Holborn Amphitheatre. Among the artists engaged were the Princess Emma Matschinsky, Miss Sinclair, Mdle. Sessi, Miss Julia Derby, Messrs. Carter, Montem Smith, Chaplin Henry, and Carl Stepan; with Mr. Howard Reynolds (cornet) and Mr. Hughes (ophicleide) as solo instrumentalists. There was a good band and efficient chorus, the whole under the direction of Mr. F. Kingsbury. The Christy Minstrels gave a chamber concert of sacred music at St. James's Hall, seconded in their efforts by Miss Bella Moore and Miss Victoria Vokes.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

A few words are all that are required to describe the last Monday "Pop." of the season. First, Haydn's *Quartet* in F (Op. 77) was played by MM. Joachim, Ries, Straus, and Piatti. Next Herr Joachim played Ernst's *Elegie* (encored) and joined Mdme. Neruda in two movements from Spohr's *Duet* in D minor. Next, Signor Piatti played a *Largo* by Boccherini. Next, Mdme. Schumann played Mendelssohn's *Presto Scherzando*. Next, Herr Pauer played Schubert's *Impromptu* in B flat. Next, Herr Hallé played Beethoven's *Variations* in F (Op. 34). Next, the three pianists played Bach's *Triple Concerto* in D minor. Next, Mdme. Joachim sang "Che Faro," and the *Frühlingsnacht* of Schumann. Next, Mr. Santley sang "Revenge! Timotheus cries," and "O Cessate di pigarmi." Next, an enormous audience went home, surfeited with the sweets of art. Next, November all will come together again.

MR. MAPLESON'S COMPANY.

Referring to the prospectus issued by Mr. Mapleson, the *Athenæum* of last Saturday observes:—

"In [the engagements of principal singers Mr. Mapleson mention that arrangements are in progress for the appearance of Mdle. Christine Nilsson, whose return to Europe is expected early in May, but it may be doubted whether this expectation will be realized. Her success in America has been financially so great that strong temptations have been thrown in her way to prolong her stay, although her desire to sing in a theatre wherein Sir Michael Costa is conductor is known to be paramount, as she feels grateful to him for his training her in music of the sacred school for the Birmingham Festival of 1866. But quite apart from the popular name of the Swedish vocalist, the *impresario* has a formidable list of *prime donne*. The new-comers mentioned in the prospectus are Mdle. Marie Marimon, Mdle. Ida Benza, Mdle. Cécile Fernandez, and Madame Corani. Of two out of these four artists, Mdle. Marimon, who is of the Patti-Nilsson school, and Mdle. Ida Benza, who is of the Grisi-Viardot class, reasonable anticipations of decided success may be entertained. The frequenters of the Brussels Operahouse will readily recollect the charm of Mdle. Marimon as actress and singer, and as St. Petersburg is seeking to engage Mdle. Benza her fame in Italy may perhaps be confirmed here. Also apart from these new artists, Mr. Mapleson has Mdle. Tietjens, Mdle. Ilma di Murska, Madame Sinico, and Madame Trebelli-Bettini, supplemented with Mdle. Léon-Duval and Mdle. Banermeister, as useful adjuncts. Of the new tenors, Signor Nicolini and Sinigaglia, the former will prove a most valuable acquisition. A Frenchman by birth, he has now sung for some seasons at the Italian Operahouse in Paris, and is quite prepared for the French as well as Italian *répertoire*. His voice has not the compass and power of that of Signor Mongini, but he has infinitely more taste and refinement. The other tenors are Signor Fancelli, Vizzani, and Rinaldini, already known. The *début* of Signor Bentani, who is known in musical circles as Mr. Bentham, and who has sung in Italy, is promised. Of baritones and basses, the supply will be very liberal, some of them coming here with great names—among whom may be cited those of Signor Bignio, from Vienna, who was liked as much as Herr Beck, quite sufficient evidence of his value; of Signor Mendioraz, from the San Carlo, Naples; of Signori Moriani and Sparapani. Besides these *débuts*, there are Signori Foli, Antonucci, Agnesi, Rives, Casaboni, Caravoglia, Celli, and Rocca—utilities all; but the most important acquisition is unquestionably that of Signor Borella, from the Lyceum, who is a veritable successor in buffo parts to Lablache and Ronconi."

[Our contemporary seems to forget that Signor Nicolini has already been heard at the Royal Italian Opera. His real name is Nicole; and he is a Frenchman—ED. M. W.]

Impromptu—conceived and made upon the spot.

The blackbird and the nightingale
Sing sweetly in the spring;
But all such carollers must fail
When Carola doth sing.

Bentwell.

MANHHEIM.—Herr August Wilhelmj appeared here lately, for the first time, and was exceedingly well received.

LEIPZIG.—Herr Langert's opera, *Dornröschen*, has been successfully produced at the Stadttheater.—Bach's *Passions-Musik* to St. Matthew was to be performed at the Gewandhaus on Good Friday.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

F. P.—Thanks for the card. On reconsideration, however, we cannot publish the letter.

SPIKE.—Right about Rossini, who was born in the same year as Shelley the poet. Wrong about Mozart, who died in 1791.

SIR HERON HEARSE is wrong in each particular. Beethoven never met Cherubini. The funeral march spoken of, the praises of which so nettled Beethoven, was in Paer's *Achille*. The story about Beethoven and Paer is just as much fudge as the story about Beethoven and Barth, touching "Adelaide." Sir Heron Hearse should read Godwin's *Essay on Sepulchres*.

DR. PLAIN wishes to know what has become of the Italian semi-mural Brigand, Guicche—a sort of Fra Diavolo, living about the mountains near Arezzo. Mr. Sutherland Edwards may know; we don't; and what is more, we don't care a fig. How about Faenza and Cortona, and Viviani the *douanier*? Stuff! *Brigandaggio* exists in Italy, and will exist, as long as there is trial by jury and capital punishment is out of the question. Dr. Plain, in Pickwickian phrase, is a noodle.

ERRATUM.—M. Louis van Waefelghem writes to say that his name is "Waefelghem," and not, as given by us last week, "Waefental." We have much pleasure in making the correction.

NOTICE.

TO ADVERTISERS.—The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs. DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyll Street (First Floor). It is requested that Advertisements may be sent not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 1871.

THE SOCIAL REPUTATION OF ARTISTS.

THERE are people who sincerely believe, and others who affect to believe, that actors and musicians have no morals; that, in fact, though their public career is associated with the purest sources of refinement, their private life is steeped in vice. Another class engrafts upon this affectation a practice which would be ridiculous were it not wicked. For instance, young men panting after a Don Juan-like reputation often boast of intrigues with actresses, to whom perhaps they have never spoken, and who would probably reject the "addresses" of these namby-pamby idiots, after Queen Bess's striking fashion. Still, as it is one of the properties of mud to stick, so injury is often done in this way to the characters of blameless people, while indirectly the whole profession suffers. No doubt there are black sheep among artists, as there are among people of every calling, but there are also numberless instances of simple and blameless lives, to which the most rigid purist could not object. People who spend much of their time in public, and, particularly, in ministering to public amusement, are necessarily objects of criticism; but, for mercy's sake, let criticism be confined to their public acts, and let their private characters be respected at least as much as those of Smith or Brown, whose most extensive dissipation may be a missionary breakfast in May.

The recent Goldschmidt trials will, we hope, do some practical good, in a general sense. For many years a slander against M. Goldschmidt has been current in society. No one knew the author, but many repeated the calumny.

"The whispered tale
That, like the fabled Nile, no fountain knows.
Fair-faced Deceit, whose wily anxious eye
Ne'er looks direct. The tongue that licks the dust,
But, when it safely dares, is prompt to sting."

The slander thus circulated over a course of years appears to have been wafted across the Atlantic, doubtless by one of

the many letters of gossip and scandal which are concocted in London for the delight and edification of Yankee readers, and which have about as slender a foundation in fact as a novel by Dumas. Published first in an American paper, the slander was re-copied in England by three journals, against which actions were brought, each of which, in addition to damages, will have to pay heavy costs. We think those damages too heavy. A nominal sum would have been amply sufficient to vindicate M. Goldschmidt's reputation. He may depend upon it, slander will not assail him in the old form again; and, if it does, that it will be powerless to do him injury.

Moreover, while thoroughly sympathizing with M. and Madame Goldschmidt, we must deprecate the imposition of such heavy penalties for an oversight, unaccompanied by personal malice, and we should be gratified to hear that M. Goldschmidt had decided to take only the expenses actually incurred. These trials have administered a smart rebuke to the people who are always chattering at the expense of artists, and who manifest an impertinent curiosity about their persons and their affairs, which they would not think of exhibiting in the case of others. Many have been the victims of this kind of annoyance, but few have ever checked it with more prompt severity than did the late Mr. Keeley on one occasion. Having taken a seat in an omnibus he became aware that two young men were scrutinizing him attentively. One of them at last said, loud enough for the actor to hear—"That's Keeley." The other appeared doubtful—and scanned Mr. Keeley as narrowly as a Scotch banker would examine a doubtful bill. "I tell you it is Keeley"—said the first young man. This was more than the amused actor could endure; therefore, looking the speaker full in the eye, he remarked—"Well, Sir, and if it is Keeley, what the d— is that to you?"

Mr. Keeley on the stage was open to remark, and no doubt made up his mind to be stared at; but Mr. Keeley in an omnibus was a private citizen, and naturally resented vulgar impertinence.

To return to M. and Madame Goldschmidt—we sincerely hope the last has been heard of this foul conspiracy against their happiness; and that should any artists, either in the flush of their fame or after they have retired upon their laurels, be hereafter persecuted by a similar outrage, they will take equally prompt measures to punish the immediate offenders, and, if possible, to drag from his lair the arch-slanderer who, in the Goldschmidt case, appears to have eluded justice.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

MR and MRS. OTTO GOLDSCHMIDT have successfully called to account some importers and retailers of scandalous gossip, manufactured abroad. They have silenced slanders, only less mischievous in effect than in design, because few attached credit to them. They have also struck a blow at a corrupt and degrading trade. £750 is not too large a sum to pay for the pleasure of calling a gentleman a spendthrift, asserting that a lady is reduced to teach music for a livelihood, and that a husband and wife living together in perfect happiness have separated by mutual consent. There are few men and women of eminence who are not from time to time the subjects of wanton and injurious falsehood. In vindicating themselves Mr. and Mrs. Otto Goldschmidt have, therefore, done a public service.

THE Sacred Harmonic Society gave their thirty-ninth annual Passion-Week performance of the *Messiah*, on Wednesday, under the direction of Sir Michael Costa, at Exeter Hall. The principal vocalists were Miss Edith Wynne, Madame Patey, Mr. Vernon Rigby, and Mr. Santley. The hall was crammed.

CONCERTS VARIOUS.

MR. AGUILAR'S MATINEES.—The following pieces were given by Mr. Aguilar at his last two performances of pianoforte music:—

Sonata in G—Beethoven; Nocturne in F sharp—Aguilar; Clavierstück (No. 1)—Schubert; Nachstück, and Arabesque—Schumann; Sonata in A minor—Aguilar; Lieder ohne Worte—Mendelssohn; Fantasia on *Lucia*—Aguilar; "Appeal," and "In a wood on a windy day," transcriptions—Aguilar; Pensée fugitive, and Mazurka—Aguilar; Sonata in D minor (Op. 31, No. 1)—Beethoven; "Oft in the still night," transcription—Aguilar; Ballade (in A flat)—Chopin; Clavierstück (No. 1), Miss Edith Alexander, pupil of Mr. Aguilar—Schubert; Sonata in D—Aguilar; "Warum?" and Nocturne (No. 1)—Schumann; "Eriu" (Fantasia on Irish airs), Miss Edith Alexander—Benedict; "Esmeralda" (Morceau caractéristique)—Aguilar; "Evening" (Romance), and "Couleur de Rose" (Galop brillant)—Aguilar.

A vocal and instrumental concert in aid of the funds of the Metropolitan and City Police Orphanage took place yesterday week at St. James's Hall, under distinguished patronage. The object of the charity is to find a home for the orphans of constables, and, although the orphanage has been opened a little over a twelvemonth, such has been the exertions of the committee that thirty-two children have already been cared for. The concert was a decided success. The hall was full, and everything passed off satisfactorily. The band of the A division of police played some overtures, &c., with great precision, and in one of their pieces—"The Hurricane Polka"—the cornet solo was so well given as to be enthusiastically encored. Signor Bottesini was much applauded for his contra-basso solo. Mr. Lewis Thomas was well received in "Largo al factotum," and Miss Banks, on being encored in "The beating of my own heart," substituted "Nae luck about the house." Miss Edith Wynne sang prettily "The Bells of Aberdovey," and was encored in her first song, "Tell me, my heart." Miss Julia Elton rendered with expression "Parted," and Miss M. Severn gained marks of approval for her "Lady of the Lea." Mr. E. Lloyd and Mr. Willford Morgan also appeared. The latter was encored in his ballad of "My Sweetheart when a boy," and his new song, "Sweet evening air," was received with great favour. Mr. H. Thomas played with skill Thalberg's pianoforte solo, "Les Huguenots," and accompanied most of the vocal music.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC.

The following is the programme (alluded to in our last) of the Students' Concert, which took place on Thursday evening (March 30th), at the Institution, in Tenterden Street:—

Polonaise, in E flat, for two performers on the pianoforte (Dussek), Miss Baillie and Miss M. Baillie. Quartetto, "Il cor e la mia fe," *Fidelio* (Beethoven), Miss Grahame, Miss Goode, Mr. Guy, and Mr. Wadmore. Sonata, in C minor, Op. 10, No. 1 (Beethoven), pianoforte, Miss Cook. Song "If o'er the boundless sky" (Molière), Mr. Burgess Perry. Duet, "Ai capricci della sorte," *L'Italiana in Algeri* (Rossini), Miss Crawford (Westmoreland scholar), and Mr. Parry. Rondo, from Sonata in G, Op. 35 (Dussek), pianoforte, Miss Hurley. Motett, for female voices, "Laudate pueri" (Mendelssohn), Soli, Miss Lalla Bagnell, Miss Antell, and Miss C. Gardner. Aria, "Adelaide" (Beethoven), Mr. Guy. Prelude and Fugue in G, for two pianofortes (Jean Vogt), Miss Watson and Miss Klugh. Song "May dew" (W. Sterndale Bennett), Miss Lalla Bagnell. Glee, "With sighs, sweet rose" (Callcott), Messrs. Burgess Perry, Howells, Shakespeare, and Parry. Song, "Rose, softly blooming, Azor and Zemira" (Spohr), Miss Rebecca Jewell. Impromptu in B flat (Schubert), pianoforte, Miss Conolly. Aria, "Del minacciar del vento," *Ottone* (Handel, 1723), Mr. Wadmore. Grand duo, in F, for two pianofortes (Cipriani Potter), Miss Newman and Miss Taylor. Songs, "Indian love," "Winter's gone" (W. Sterndale Bennett), Miss Ferrari. Lieder ohne Worte (Mendelssohn), pianoforte, Miss Martin. Part song, "Far o'er the wide-spreading landscape swells" (Ferdinand Hiller), Misses Ferrari, Grahame, Jones, Bainsfather, C. Gardner, and Goodwin, Messrs. Guy, Howells, Parry, and Wadmore. Valse, in A flat, Op. 34, No. 1 (Chopin), pianoforte, Mr. Ridgway. Sextet, "Sola, Sola," *Don Giovanni* (Mozart), Misses Jessie Jones, Rebecca Jewell, and Goode; Messrs. Shakespeare, Wadmore, and Parry.

The accompanists of the vocal music were Miss Jessie Ferrari, Messrs. Kemp, Fanning, and Shakespeare. The last public rehearsal took place on Tuesday morning, April 4th.

Mrs. CHRISTINE NILSSON, owing to protracted engagements consequent upon her recent illness in the United States, will be unable to come to London for the present season. As she has entered into arrangements to join an operatic company for the autumn and winter, it is more than probable that she will also remain in America during the interval.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

The *Sunday Times* of April 2 speaks as follows of Madame Arabella Goddard's performance at her recent benefit in St. James's Hall:—

"The penultimate concert (Monday Popular) of the season took place last Monday, and was given for the benefit of Madame Arabella Goddard, whose friends and admirers rallied round her in large numbers. Our famous pianist is not so often heard in St. James's Hall as could be desired; all the greater, therefore, was the anxiety to be present on the occasion. The audience, as usual when Madame Goddard plays, largely consisted of connoisseurs, for, however much the name and reputation of foreign artists may influence the mass, our countrywoman exerts the greatest power over those who can listen with really appreciative ears. From this it may be imagined with what warmth the artist was received, and, as Madame Goddard never played better in her life, how much applause her every effort called forth. Briefly, the affair was a triumph in which every amateur zealous for the musical reputation of England could share.

"Madame Goddard introduced, first, Schubert's sonata in B flat, the ultimate work of its kind which came from the gifted Viennese composer's pen. Few, probably, are wholly unacquainted with its merits seeing that the sonatas of Schubert are more or less known in every musical home. We have no call, therefore, to expatiate upon the beauties of the work; nor, in any case, have we space for an exhaustive description of their claims. Let those who desire to understand the height and depth of a composition singularly interesting in its character take the next opportunity of hearing it played by Madame Goddard. No exposition could be more complete in detail, more true in outline, or more faithful in expression, than that of Monday evening. With the conscientiousness of a true artist Madame Goddard had the music not only at her fingers' ends, but in her head and heart. That is to say, she comprehended and felt it; whilst obedient and unerring mechanism conveyed it to the audience. The effect was unique, and, if any present had doubts of the player before—which we can hardly conceive—they must have recognized an artist of the highest claims, and the noblest order. Madame Goddard next joined Herr Joachim in Mozart's sonata in G for piano and violin. This, compared to the Schubert music, was child's play; nevertheless, both artists brought to it as much care and thought as though its execution strained every faculty. Finally, the *beneficiaire* was heard, with Herr Joachim and Signor Piatti, in the famous and masterly D minor trio of Mendelssohn. Those who sat the concert out to the end had, we need not say, a rare treat in hearing three such artists play such music. In every respect the performance was a thing to be remembered. Madame Goddard was recalled after each appearance, and she has rarely been the object of more unanimous applause."

In a very interesting notice of Madame Goddard's benefit at the Monday Popular Concerts, the *Morning Advertiser* of the 28th ult. has the following:—

"Last night's concert was for the benefit of Madame Arabella Goddard, who never played more superbly in the whole course of her artistic life, and who has evidently made a special study of the much-neglected pianoforte sonata of Franz Schubert. Madame Arabella Goddard had a most cordial reception when she came forward to play Schubert's great sonata in B flat major, the last he composed. Our great English pianist has been for some time past unavoidably absent from the concert-room; and if anything were wanting to prove her value in the musical world, it would be such an extraordinarily perfect rendering of a great work as that she gave last night. In the first movement, where it is of such infinite importance, her command of the *legato* was wonderful. The tone was not only sustained with marvellous skill, but every fine and delicate gradation seemed to be produced almost as naturally as by the human voice. In Madame Goddard's rendering of this sonata every qualification which helps to constitute high art in pianoforte playing is to be found. Her reading of the work is poetical to a degree, free from pedantic affectation, and undisfigured by extremes of any kind. Chasteness of expression is joined with faultless mechanical skill, and not a note is mis-d. No point either is lost; in fact, it may be safely said that a finer performance of this sonata has never been given here or elsewhere. Of this Madame Goddard may be sure, namely, that her playing of the B flat sonata is, by those best qualified to judge, accepted as one of her noblest achievements in that work of art which she so greatly adorns."

ORATORIO CONCERTS.

The Choir thus notices the performance of Sir J. Benedict's *St. Peter*, given under Mr. Barnby's direction:—

"The pleasure which every composer must derive from the performance of his own excellent work by a thoroughly efficient musical com-

pany undoubtedly belonged to Sir Julius Benedict on Wednesday. Artists such as Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, Madame Patey, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley, assisted by such an orchestra and chorus as that under the direction of Mr. J. Barnby at St. James's Hall, naturally encouraged a numerous audience to expect that ample justice would be done to all parts of the oratorio *St. Peter*; and that these anticipations were fully realized the reception of the whole was sufficient testimony. Avoiding any notice of the work performed on Wednesday, and confining ourselves to remarks on the performance, we may observe with regard to the soloists that the beautiful air in Part II., 'I mourn as a dove,' was evidently better suited to Madame Lemmens-Sherrington's expressive voice than the bravura solo (with chorus), 'The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind,' and was heartily and deservedly applauded. The contralto music, consisting largely of recitative, was carefully given throughout by Madame Patey; the charming air, 'O, thou afflicted,' producing a marked effect. Of Mr. Sims Reeves' rendering of the parts allotted to him, nothing more need be said than that it was in his most chaste and finished style, the pathetic solo, 'O house of Jacob,' eliciting much applause, while the conclusion of 'The Lord is very pitiful,' gave rise to a strenuous, though vain, expression of desire for its repetition. Mr. Santley, the representative of *St. Peter*, accomplished the large share of work which fell to him with his usual spirit and success, his delivery of the air, 'The Lord hath sent his angel,' which, on account of its position near the end of the second part, scarcely received the attention it merited, being perhaps the most remarkable. The solos in *St. Peter*, however, gave place to the choruses as successful portions of the work, and gave the choir an opportunity for the display of its training and powers which it rarely let slip. The effective music in No. 3, to the words, 'What thing is this?' 'Who art thou?' 'Art thou Elias?' the solid chorus, 'The deep uttereth His voice,' and the ingenious double fugue to the words, 'Fire and hail,' &c., as examples of precision, and the choruses, 'The Lord be a lamp,' and 'He is like a lamb,' as instances of expression, may be specially mentioned. The orchestral performance was good throughout, the rendering of the interlude representing the rising of the storm being particularly telling. It only remains to add that Mr. Docker at the organ made excellent use of the materials at his command, and to congratulate Mr. Barnby upon the admirable efficiency of the choir under his direction at St. James's Hall."

MUSIC AT BERLIN.

(From a Correspondent.)

There were grand doings at the Royal Operahouse on Monday, the 20th March, when the Emperor-King appeared for the first time at the theatre since his return from the late campaign. The grand tier and the stage-boxes were occupied exclusively by persons who had received invitations from the Court; the remainder of the house was filled by the general public, all in evening dress. Soon after seven o'clock, their Majesties the Emperor and Empress made their appearance, the former wearing the uniform of the second Garde-Landwehr Regiment. The Imperial pair were greeted with enthusiastic cheers. In the Imperial box were the Crown-Prince, the Crown-Princess, the Princes and Princesses of the Court, and the guests of the Emperor; in the boxes of the first tier were Prince Bismarck, Count Moltke, etc. The performance commenced with Gluck's overture to *Iphigenie in Aulis*. The curtain was then raised, and the audience beheld the Temple of Fame with gaily decorated columns. The members of the company were drawn up in a semi-circle round it. Mdme. Lucca advanced and sang the "Seht er kommt mit Preis gekrönt" ("See the conquering Hero comes"), from Handel's *Judas Maccabæus*; the chorus then took up the strain, which was followed by the National Anthem, during which the entire audience remained standing. The scene at the back of the stage then divided, displaying a grove of oaks. In it was the bust of the Emperor-King, while on one side stood Hermann and on the other Borussia, holding a wreath of laurel over the Emperor's head. Before this group was the Genius of Peace; above it, the Iron-Cross, with the dates, 1870-71. Again did the building ring with enthusiastic cheers for the Emperor, who kept bowing on every side. This was followed by the first act of *Lohengrin*, with Mesdames Mallinger, Brandt, Herren Niemann, Betz, Behrens, and Schelper; and the second act of the *Feldlager in Schlesien*, with Mesdames Lehmann, Horina, Herren Salomon, Woworsky, Fricke, and Schelper; the whole terminated with "Die Wacht am Rhein."

MUSIC IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

(From the "Daily Telegraph.")

The new Education Act has had the anticipated effect of letting loose squadrons of hobbies all over the country. There are, probably, few men who do not think themselves qualified to keep a school; and fewer school managers who are not, in their own estimation, more competent to teach than their trained and certified masters. This is a weakness of human nature specially appertaining to things educational and hence it was a foregone conclusion, that Mr. Forster's Act would bring to light no end of fancies and schemes on behalf of a lucky and rising generation. It was certain, for example, that the advocates of musical culture would start into violent activity—the more certain because the art is fascinating enough to make all its followers enthusiasts. Accordingly the musical hobby-riders have been well to the fore of late. They have ambled at the London School Board with the well-trained grace of Mr. Hepworth Dixon, have pranced into the Commons House of Parliament with the dash of Mr. Winterbotham, and trooped along Downing Street with all the stolid courage of a "numerous and influential deputation." To a certain extent everybody must sympathize with the object in view; for there is no doubt that musical education in England has been shamefully neglected; though neglect is far from strange. When children are taught only as they are hurried from the cradle to the field, the factory, or the shop, every minute of the time available is demanded by essential studies. Consequently, music, as a thing not essential, has received little notice; and the efforts made to extend any such tuition have been steadily discouraged by general indifference to the result. Under such circumstances, a national culture of the art—at least in the elementary schools—could not exist, and it only remained to look for the better days which now seem to be approaching. No wonder, then, that those who have long grieved over the neglect of a noble and elevating accomplishment are enforcing its claims with zealous persistence. Their object merits and enjoys the sympathy of every right-minded man; for that it is desirable to introduce that branch of instruction into our schools there can be no question. The day has passed when a knowledge of music was scouted in some quarters as undignified, and condemned in others as the foundation of loose habits. Such prejudices no longer exist, and, if wishing availed, England would stand first among nations devoted to the art. All this, however, supplies no reason for disregarding the wise old injunction to "hasten slowly." Enthusiasts may keenly feel past neglect, and may desire to atone for it with all possible speed; but the subject is one among many, and takes secondary rank.

Moreover, it has to be considered as part and parcel of an elaborate whole, the arrangement of which is a very serious business. We are at last putting our educational house in order, and the work must be done with a grave deliberation proportioned to the momentous consequences involved. Hence, much as we sympathize with the advocates of musical instruction it is clear that when they demand for their hobby an attention belonging to more important things, they are, to say the least, indiscreet. There was really no cause for the fuss made in certain quarters when Mr. Forster excluded music from the list of special subjects contemplated by the Government grant, though, to judge by the outcry that arose, the Minister had stultified his own office. Could it have entered into the heads of the gentlemen who so promptly flew to arms and invaded Downing Street that the Government desires to keep music out of the national curriculum, which, it is to be hoped, will meet the general wants and wishes? The idea is absurd; because the English people know just enough about the art to recognize its value, and to desire a further knowledge. Music will be taught in elementary schools as a matter of course, and the fact was not less a fact when Mr. Forster excluded it from his list of officially recognized subjects. That the Government arrangement simply turned upon the question of present convenience and practicability, became clear when Mr. Forster touched on the degree to which his inspectors were not qualified as musical examiners. Though the right honourable gentleman's observation excited no small ridicule among the hobby-riders, its immediate effect should have been to set their fears at rest. No branch of study can be permanently excluded from the Government scheme by the temporary obstacle to which Mr. Forster made reference; and no sane Minister could intend such a result to flow from such a cause. It is possible, however, that those who are charged with the task of shaping a truly national plan of education desire, for the present, to put aside music and those kindred subjects which are the adornments of the edifice—the carving and painting designed to redeem it from the charge of being merely utilitarian. As such, their time will come by-and-by; meanwhile rougher work has to be done, foundations have to be laid, walls to be built, and a roof to be put on. It is of no use, however, to preach the doctrine of "Everything in its season" to a man with a hobby. His hobby is always in season. Mr. Forster has yielded to the attacks made upon him—terrified, perhaps, at the prospect of being known to posterity by the style and title of the "barbarian" who

resisted the march of art; and next year the grant to each school will be diminished, unless the inspector be satisfied that vocal music forms a regular part of the education given.

So far victory is with those who advocate the cause of music in season, and especially out of season; but it strikes us that the real difficulties of the matter are only just commencing. The present arrangement cannot last, because it merely sanctions what requires to be strictly regulated. Left to itself, musical education must go on in a shambling fashion, and produce the results to be expected from want of system. Need it be said that such results are, in a special sense, worthless? Music, of all things, requires to be taught well. Moreover, a recognized national cultivation of the art should proceed upon some well-defined and generally enforced method; and to satisfy these conditions is no easy task. There is sectarianism in music as well as in religion; and when uniformity comes to be applied, as come it must, the difference between the two leading schools will give rise to a very pretty quarrel. Nor will the struggle be altogether unequal, as between the advocates of the recognized notation and those who adhere to what is called the "Tonic Sol-fa." While musical educationalists generally have been waiting for the hopeful prospects which now excite their ardour, the disciples of Mr. John Curwen have been working, and, thanks to perfect organization, backed by much earnestness of purpose, they have gained a footing, from which it will be hard indeed to dislodge them. Upon the merits of their system, as compared with others we shall not pronounce; it is sufficient to point out the fact that the system exists, is flourishing, and has on its side, to a large extent, the "nine points of the law" included in possession of the ground. On the other hand, those who know music through the medium of the venerable notation which has grown out of the wisdom and experience of centuries, and is the universal written language of musical thought are not likely to sanction its discontinuance. They may argue that the short time available for the study of the art in elementary schools will not permit a mastery of both systems, and that to choose the "Tonic Sol-fa" would be to separate England from the great musical family of nations by teaching her people a language intelligible only to themselves. Thus stands the case, and the prospect is not encouraging. The struggle, however, will have to be encountered; and we can hardly blame Mr. Forster for putting it off till a time when it can do little harm by retarding the settlement of more urgent matters. On the other hand, we may well question the wisdom of those who have been trying their best to add a musical battle royal to the anxieties of the present situation. That they succeeded only in part is due to a dexterous arrangement which postpones the difficulty for a time. Let us hope, then, that the earnest advocates of a genuine educational reform will reserve their strongest endeavours for the season when their real opportunity will arise. Music can wait, but the "three R's" cannot; and, when uneducated England is able to read, write, and cipher, we will all go earnestly to work at teaching it to sing.

MUSIC IN BIRMINGHAM.

(From our own Correspondent).

The success which attended Sir Julius Benedict's oratorio, *St. Peter*, on its production at the Birmingham Festival last year, and its subsequent hearing in London and elsewhere, has now been fully confirmed by a second performance of the work in the building where it was first made known to the public; and the Festival Choral Society has thus closed its present series of concerts, with credit to itself and satisfaction to the numerous subscribers. The solo soprano part fell to Madame Lemmens-Sherrington, who, although suffering from a cold, sang in a manner that delighted all hearers, and finally warmed them to enthusiasm by the chaste and finished way in which the pathetic air, "I mourn as a dove," and the trying "Gird up thy loins" (transposed half a tone lower than as originally sung by Mdlle. Tietjens), were given. Mdlle. Drasill's rich contralto voice told with wonderful effect in the music allotted to her, and the applause of the audience showed how fully her efforts were appreciated. Mr. Vernon Rigby made the mark he usually does in Birmingham; and Mr. Lewis Thomas has never sung better. He delivered the whole of the bass music with genuine feeling and legitimate expression, fairly dividing the honours of the evening. The chorus (one or two slips allowed for) sang magnificently, but the band was very far from perfect; indeed in more than one instance, either through carelessness or incompetence (or both), the instrumental part was downright discreditable. For this, however, not the slightest blame can be attached to the conductor, Mr. Stockley, who invariably exerts himself to the utmost, but cannot perform the

impossible task of making a good orchestra out of material by no means the best of its kind, and with such very scant opportunity of rehearsal with the band.

On the same night Mr. Mapleson opened his short series of operas at the Theatre Royal with *La Sonnambula* (substituted for *Faust*, the music of which had gone astray at Liverpool) with Mdlle. Ilma di Murska as the heroine. With what poetic charm this lady invests the character, and what daring flights of vocalization are not only attempted but successfully achieved, need not be told. Suffice it to say that the audience atoned in enthusiasm for what it lacked in numbers, and Mdlle. di Murska made a veritable triumph. Signor Bentami (why not Mr. Bentham?) has a voice of agreeable quality, and worth cultivating, but at present singing and acting are somewhat amateurish. Mdlle. Bauermeister as Lisa, and Signor Foli as the Count, left nothing to be desired. On Friday *Der Freischütz* was played to a crowded house, and with great and deserved success. Mdlle. Tietjens's Agatha is fortunately too well known to need description, and it is enough to record that the great *prima donna* was in wonderfully fine voice, and sang her best throughout, producing the customary effect upon the Birmingham public, with whom she is an immense favourite. Anything more delightfully piquant than Mdlle. Sinico as Annchen can hardly be imagined, singing and acting being equally good, drawing down loud and deserved recognition. As Max, Signor Vizzani had ample opportunity of displaying the fine voice he possesses, which, if aided by a little more energy and a little more attention to light and shade, combined with a great deal more study of his art, would go far to place him in the first rank of Italian tenors. Signor Foli's Caspar was, both dramatically and vocally, a really fine performance from beginning to end, and well deserved the applause so freely bestowed. In the little part of the Bridesmaid, Mdlle. Bauermeister sang, as she always does, very nicely. Of the other parts, the less said the better. The band and chorus, conducted by Signor Bevigiani, though small, were at once efficient and sufficient.

The crowning performance of the week was on the Saturday night, when Mozart's *Il Flauto Magico* was played, like *Der Freischütz*, for the first time here. The Pamina of Mdlle. Tietjens, the Tamino of Signor Bellini, the Astrifiamante of Mdlle. di Murska, and the Papagena of Mdlle. Sinico, are familiar representations to London opera-goers, and to say that each and all of these artists acquitted themselves in a manner worthy their reputation is sufficient. The Sarastro of Signor Foli is not, however, so well known, and demands a separate line of unqualified praise, the whole of the music being sung in a manner which must have satisfied the most critical, and which received, as it deserved, the highest commendation. As a rule, encores in opera are detestable, but there was no resisting the demand for a repetition of "Qui sdegno," and none but must have felt pleasure in listening to it a second time. The quaint dance of the slaves with Signor Celli, an amusing Monostatos, Papagena's "Colomba e tortorella," and the duet of Papagena and Papagena were also encores. Signor Caravoglio's peculiar humour found scope in the part of the Birdcatcher, but will hardly efface the recollection of Ronconi in the character. The remaining parts were fairly sustained, and the band and chorus again acquitted themselves more than creditably. The theatre was crowded to repletion, even standing-room being at a premium, and the audience demonstrated their gratification in a manner at once hearty and unmistakable.

The great organ in the Crystal Palace Handel Orchestra is being materially enlarged and thoroughly renovated, in view of the coming Handel Festival.

COLOGNE.—Herr Franz Ries played at the Last Gürzenich Concert his own "Adagio e Rondo capriccioso."

DRESDEN.—M. Elias Slatinn, from St. Petersburg, lately gave a concert at which he introduced various works by Russian composers. Among them was the overture to Dargomizsky's opera, *Russalka*; the overtures to *Life for the Czar*, and *Ruslan and Ludmila*; the capriccioso on "La Jota Aragonesa" and "Kamarinskaja," by Glinka; and *Ivan the Terrible*, by M. Anton Rubinstein. The entire performance went off very well, with the exception of M. Rubinstein's *Ivan*, which did not please the audience, and which some of the local critics attack in no measured terms.

THE HANDEL FESTIVAL.

"Once more," to quote official words, "the ceaseless march of Time has brought the year in which England plays supreme homage to her favourite musician." To the public this fact simply means a period of pleasurable expectation and certain days of high enjoyment. To those upon whom devolve the heavy cares of managing an enterprise like the Handel Festival, it means very hard work for months prior to the time when the event comes off. Already much preparatory labour has been accomplished, and one result is before us in the shape of a pamphlet, entitled *Programme of Arrangements*. This, it should be noted, is more than a mere catalogue of works to be performed, accompanied by information as to business arrangements. The *avant-courier* of the Handel Festival seeks to create an intelligent interest in the great musician and his works; above all it seeks to vindicate the importance of the triennial gatherings as a means of stimulating musical culture, and as a unique exposition of the present state of the art. A document of such a character may well have notice here, even apart from the interesting details of the approaching Festival with which it abounds. Among the claims of the Festival is that which consists in the proportion between the work to be done and the means for doing it. Some remarks, with special reference to *Israel in Egypt*, may here be quoted as of general applicability to the music of Handel:—

"*Israel in Egypt* cannot be overweighted even by accumulating the Pelion upon the Ossa of sound. So far from this, the music becomes more impressive with every added power. It absorbs power, so to speak, as the thirsty earth drinks in the welcome rain, and is only satisfied when the limit of receptive capacity has been reached. The 'new revelation' of Handel's genius afforded by the Handel Festivals has already been mentioned, and now is the time to state that *Israel in Egypt* affords it in a special sense. 'When he chooses,' said Mozart, of his illustrious predecessor, 'he strikes like a thunderbolt; and the great choruses of the Plagues, and of the Song of Miriam, are a succession of thunderbolts forged by the most gigantic of the Cyclops. But for their full effect, the means of expression must be proportionate, and not till the Handel Festivals supplied those means did the whole grandeur of *Israel in Egypt* come forth. Who, having heard a performance of this work by the '4,500,' will ever forget the new sensations evoked as he—

—took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death;

or will ever lose the impressions made by the wondrous tone-pictures as they successively revealed themselves?" None who have attended the Handel Festivals will deny the force of these remarks, or question the unique revelation of grandeur and power made by the vast army of exponents which can only be mustered at the Crystal Palace. Grand as is the effect of Handel's works in many another place," says the writer of the Festival pamphlet, "it is to the impression made by these performances as Shaffhausen to Niagara. We are shown, not a diminished copy, but the natural portions of the giant musician; and only by their help can the most ardent Handelian comprehend how gigantic he is."

Again, it is claimed for the Handel Festivals that they "set up a standard of attainment for the whole country; not, it is true, in respect of a power simply impossible elsewhere, but with regard to efficiency of other kinds." The argument is that so long as Handel's music remains the favourite music of the nation, an "authoritative expositor" should exist "as a guard against false readings, and wrongful interpretations, not less than as a model for general guidance." The pretensions advanced in these words are not likely to be unanimously recognized, but few will doubt the fact that upon the festivals are brought to bear "all that Handelian tradition has transmitted, and all that long years of experience and study by men devoted to the work have suggested. In this connection we find a compliment paid to the Sacred Harmonic Society, which must be transcribed.

"The Sacred Harmonic Society charged itself, more than thirty years ago, with the mission of extending a knowledge of Handel's oratorios, and the self-imposed duty has been done so well that Exeter Hall is looked upon as the chief shrine of the Handelian faith. Upon the larger stage of the Crystal Palace, and under conditions entailing almost boundless influence, the society, every three years, sets before a national musical congress what in reality is the standard of interpretive power and executive skill. This Handel-loving England of ours could ill afford to lose the advantage so presented—an advantage the influence of which radiates to every part of the country, stimulating a love for the master's works, and showing with what conscientious solicitude they ought to be performed."

No tribute was ever more thoroughly earned than this, for it is not too much to say that without the co-operation of the Sacred Harmonic Society, the depository, so to speak, of Handelian traditions, no such an event as the approaching Festival could take place.

A third reason for the existence of the triennial gatherings is found in the consequent exaltation of music "eminently fitted to keep the national note sound." Again we must quote the official words:—

"That these are days of change and innovation is a truism of truisms; and music by no means escapes the influence of novelty in theory and practice."

An opinion upon the merits of the case thus presented would be manifestly out of order here, but all parties must agree that it is well to have enshrined in the heart of the nation, and daily used among the people, compositions at once so healthy and so inspired as those of Handel. What the English Bible is to the English language, the great master's works may be to English music—a preservative of purity, simplicity, and strength—a sound heart keeping sound the entire body. Left to himself, Handel would retain his hold upon public regard, but these triennial festivals show him not as one among a crowd of gifted musicians, so much as the chiefest of them all, as a man whom the entire nation delights to honour for the sake of works it is never weary of hearing. Even the minority, who have no music in their souls, must be impressed once in three years with the greatness of Handel, though unable to share in the homage he evokes. As regards all others, it is not too much to say that, for the time being, the mighty composer exerts an influence unparalleled in the history of art."

Certainly no admirers or the great master will question the statements here made, while not a few musicians of modern tastes will admit that Handel is needed by way of drag to keep the musical coach from running downhill to a smash at the bottom. Handel's music is unquestionably "a preservative of purity, simplicity, and strength," for which reason the extraordinary importance given to it at these festivals confers a value not easily over-rated upon the festivals themselves.

Passing from the domain of vindication to that of preparation, we find it stated that the Festival will take place on Friday, the 16th; Monday, the 19th; Wednesday, the 21st; and Friday, the 23rd of June. The programme will resemble that of every former occasion, by consisting of the *Messiah*, *Israel in Egypt*, and a Selection. The two great oratorios are set down as a matter of course; while the advantages of a Selection are too obvious for detail. As regards the pieces chosen, we are told that "full particulars must be deferred for the present, with the general statement that the programme will comprise the Dettingen *Te Deum*, excerpts from various oratorios, cantatas, &c., including many pieces not in the programmes of previous festivals; and a selection from the oratorio of *Solomon*; in addition to which one of Handel's organ concertos will be performed." We may infer from this that an attractive scheme will be presented, and that the second day of the Festival will show no falling off in excellence. The band and chorus are to be of the same dimensions as in 1868—that is to say, about 4,500 performers will combine their energies; and the whole will be conducted by Sir Michael Costa, the only man we have, perhaps, able to control so vast a body, and make it execute with promptitude and skill his slightest bidding. In preparation for the Festival, the organ is now being "materially enlarged and thoroughly renovated so that its co-operation will prove more than usually effective in those choruses where grandeur and fulness to the utmost possible extent are desirable." As regards the principal vocalists, an appeal is made for confidence in the managers' choice. Particulars will be duly announced, and, meanwhile, the public may take for granted that the highest available talent will be secured to honour an occasion and to interpret works for which it alone is competent.

Such are the salient points of the pamphlet just issued from the Crystal Palace. That they will prove satisfactory is hardly doubtful; and we may, therefore, anticipate for the great event of June a success not less great than the success of previous festivals.

THADDEUS EGG.

Times for Music.

BLUBBERINGS OF A BROKEN BARITONE.

By S. D. S.

Alas! alas! "my case is DO,"

"My sun of life has set,"

But, could I keep one lingering RE,

I might be happy yet.

Chanting an E's no ease to MI,

At upper notes I strain,

Doubtful of FA—"so near yet FA,"

I strive for it in vain.

E'en "dead heads" "long have doomed my SOL,"

"Too flat!" "you're old," they cry.

Fools! oh! SOL sinks by nature's LA,

So, "how is that for high?"

Gone are all those I used to SI

DO, RE, MI, FA and near.

Naught's left me, but—to drink—to die—

My SOL, LA, SI's my "bier!"

MENDELSSOHN.

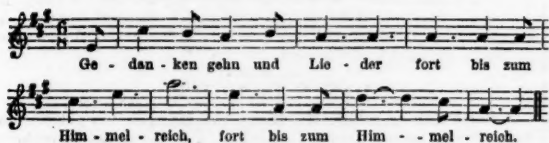
In one of the burial grounds at Berlin, called the "Trinity Church-yard," are deposited the mortal remains of one of our greatest composers, viz., Mendelssohn Bartholdy, and by his side those of his highly accomplished sister, Fanny Henselt, *née* Bartholdy, whom he so dearly loved and idolized, and who exercised a very important influence upon his artistic development.

One day, in company with some friends, Mendelssohn, half jokingly, sketched a plain cross, after which design, he said, he should like a monument. Upon his grave stands this plain cross in marble with the following inscription:

JACOB LUDWIG
FELIX
MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY
GEB.
ZU
HAMBURG
AM
3. FEBRUAR
1809
GEST.
ZU
LEIPZIG
AM
4. NOV.
1847.

His sister's monument is a large stone in the shape of an altar, upon which is engraved the following inscription, and subjoined to it a poetical sentence of "Eichendorff," set to music:—

FANNY CECILIA
HENSELT
GEBORNE
MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY
GEB.
DEN 14 NOV. 1805
GEST.
DEN 14, MAY 1847.



English Version.

"The human thoughts and songs arise
To heaven and God's throne."

Some years ago a friend of mine, Dr. H., visiting Berlin, kindly drew a sketch of the graves, which I purpose to add to a *brochure* I intend to publish as "Reminiscences of Mendelssohn, from his earlier years to his death by his friend and fellow student," but which I have at present to postpone.
DR. FERDINAND RAHLES.

London, March, 1871.

MR. AND MRS. CHARLES MATHEWS, who took their departure from Sydney, New South Wales, on the 31st January, arrived in San Francisco, California, on the 12th of March.

Moscow.—Madame Arlot has just concluded a most successful engagement at the Imperial Operahouse. After her performance in *La Figlia del Reggimento*, the students got up a torch-light procession in her honour, and presented her with a silver drum wreathed with laurel. Shortly before her departure for Breslau, some other admirers begged her acceptance of a costly bracelet, set with diamonds and emeralds, and worth 20,000 francs.

Orsini is looking up in the Roman capital, where the presence of members of the Royal Family brings with it the very needful sunshine of State patronage. The Princess Margherita is a frequent attendant at the Apollo Theatre, but as a proof that such visits are a novelty it is said that on the first occasion, when she was not expected, she was kept a quarter of an hour in her carriage while the key of her box was being searched for—*Choir*.

AN AMERICAN PRODIGY.

It is not so many months since a name began to be whispered about in Art and musical circles, which, although not unknown to the public, had heretofore been associated with another field of usefulness and honourable achievement. "Demorest" is a household word in two hemispheres; but who is Vienna Demorest, the girl composer, the fresh young singer, whose songs Nilsson has sung, whose voice Nilsson had praised, and prophesied a great future for? As to who this young artist is, it is sufficient to say that she is the daughter of the well-known publisher and leader of fashion, Mr. and Mdme. Demorest, and that her career so far justifies the predictions of future success. Since the first dawning of her intelligence, Vienna Demorest has displayed the rarest musical capacity, and a gift of musical improvisation, which may be the foreshadowing of greatness. Young as she is, and modest to a fault, Miss Demorest is quite exceptional in her gifts and possibilities. Her compositions which first attracted attention are brilliant in expression and varied in character. Her polkas, mazurkas, galops, are played by noted leaders of bands, viz., Dodworth, Baker, Grafulla, Operiti, and Downing, with whom, and with the public they are great favourites. One of her latest songs, "Birdie," written for Mdle. Nilsson, and accepted by her, is charming, and likely to achieve permanent popularity.

It is not as a composer alone, however, that Vienna Demorest has won distinction; her interpretation of music is as pure and true as her written expression of it is rare and conscientious. She has a voice of exceeding beauty, flexibility, and strength; an admirable method, trained under the best teachers; a clear enunciation, broad, well-marked, pleasing, and a sympathetic style, and unusual beauty and grace of person. Her voice has a register possessed by very few, even of our first-class singers, and her correct and easy execution of the most difficult passages excite the enthusiasm of artists and critics.

Undoubtedly dramatic and operatic success are within her reach, but we predict her highest triumphs in oratorio. For this severe branch of musical art she possesses special qualifications; a voice in the first place capable of expressing religious ideas with feeling and grandeur; an intelligent appreciation, in the second place, of poetic thought, and the power of reproducing the imagery of the author.

The interpretation of a grand work, much less its execution, by this gifted young girl seems to rank among the marvels; but those who have heard and seen her, will, we think, justify us in placing her in the front rank of vocalists.—*Phrenological Journal (American)*.

WAIFS.

Herr Wagner has written a march in honour of the German victories.

Mr. Hugo Pierson's *Jerusalem* is to be performed at Leipsic next autumn.

There is a vacancy for a chorister boy at New College, Oxford. The salary is ten to fifteen pounds per annum, with board and lodging.

Herr Carl Reinecke, conductor of the Leipsic Gewandhaus Concerts, is expected in London this month, to remain here during the greater part of the season. He will bring with him a new overture composed in celebration of the peace.

On Sir Julius Benedict making his appearance as conductor at Mdme. Arabella Goddard's benefit, in connection with the Monday Popular Concerts, he was received with applause, which showed how heartily the bestowal upon him of knightly honours is ratified by the public at large.

The Lord Bishop of Chichester, has become President of the "Brighton and Sussex Choral Association," and the programme for the ensuing season includes a great schools' choral festival of 1,000 voices, to be held in the Dome at Brighton, on the 24th of May; Mr. Walter Newport will conduct, and Mr. E. J. Hopkins will preside at the organ.

If there is any sound more jarring to the nerves than that of a grand piano when struck violently, it would be well to have it mentioned for the convenience of literary simile. In the upper part the sound is a horrible screech; in the lower part a most aggravating metallic blow, followed by a jangling, discordant, growling vibration. The screaming of a child, the noise of the filing of a saw, the squealing of a pig under a gate, are but moderate inflictions on the ear compared to the metallic screech and jarring growl which a blow elicits from this instrument. The piano is incapable of dramatic or orchestral effects. In its piano tones it is agreeable and brilliant. It should be used alone in this, its sphere. The tugging of a grand piano to bring out grand effects is a most villainous assault and battery upon an undeveloped ear. For these tones a tin kettle, a horse fiddle, the sheet-iron thunder of the theatre, or any other noise, could be substituted with relief to the ear. The endurance of this is a striking example of the imposition the public will accept under the name of music.—*Cincinnati Gazette*.

Miss Sophie and Miss Francesca Ferrari, daughters of the late lamented Signor Ferrari, announce their first concert, to be given in the Queen's Concert Rooms, Hanover Square, on Saturday morning, April 29th, under the patronage of H.R.H. the Princess Christian and H.R.H. the Princess Louise. Great interest is felt for these youthful vocalists, to whose promising talent, as students, we have often had occasion to refer.

A performance of Mr. J. F. Barnett's new Cantata, *Paradise and the Peri*, has recently taken place at Sale, in the neighbourhood of Manchester, and gave great satisfaction to a large audience. The *Manchester Courier* speaks warmly of the music, and recommends it to be performed at one of the subscription concerts in Manchester.

The service at Westminster Abbey on Thursday evening commenced with the ordinary Evensong as far as the Psalms, when Bach's *Passions-Musik* was performed, the Dean preaching a sermon between the first and second parts. The choir was surprised, and numbered nearly three hundred voices, with a double orchestra. The admission of the public was free, and, as the Dean bore all the expenses, there was no collection. We shall give further particulars in our next.

After the introduction to his first volume of Roxburghe Ballads for the Ballad Society, Mr. William Chappell will give a list of all the publishers of black-letter ballads in the seventeenth century. In the introduction Mr. Chappell notices how in England, Scotland, and Holland, the extreme Puritanism which put an end to the school of music in each country, was followed by a progressive increase of drunkenness, with its attendant vices and crimes. The great Dutch school of music of the fifteenth century was silenced and has never revived.

We know of nobody that is so little regarded as the duty of praise. We do not refer to "praising the Lord," for we do not see that He needs it. Besides, being all-powerful, to "praise" Him, in the literal sense, would be open to the suspicion of cringing or fawning. It would seem to look as though one wanted to come to Him over Divine Providence, for some interested motive. We do not say this in a profane spirit. Far from it. What is meant by the Scripture injunction to praise God, is not the thing popularly understood by it. For "praise" implies critical judgment. How can we praise God without judging Him? And shall the finite judge the Infinite? If we are to praise Him, in the common sense of the word, we must also censure Him, when we do not see our way clear to approve of His mysterious doings. The praise we speak of as a neglected duty is the praise of our fellow men, when they do anything notable or deserving. This is a sacred duty, the performance of which brings into exercise the noblest traits of the heart and intellect. For praise is the just meed of merit. It is the proper stimulant of honest exertion. It is the well-won crown of honourable achievement. It requires rare magnanimity to perform this great duty faithfully. For your enemy may do something praiseworthy. Your rival; the man whom you dislike; the man whom you detest; your competitor in business; your unfaithful friend; your treacherous foe, may achieve a triumph in art, or arms, or letters. Then arise the fiendish powers of envy, jealousy, malice, and all uncharitableness, and search out their mean protest against a generous recognition of unfriendly merit. He who listens to this protest and obeys its base suggestions is a poor creature, destitute of any spark of magnanimity. But reckless praise is as heinous a sin as jealous criticism or niggardly recognition. Honest and discriminating praise draws the just distinction between genius and talent; between talent and mediocrity; between mediocrity and imbecility. Let each have his due.—*San Francisco Figaro*.

Of the acoustic properties of the Royal Albert Hall, as tested by the first vocal and instrumental music in December last, we spoke in terms of satisfaction, which, fortunately, we have now no occasion to modify. But opinion on the matter—educated opinion, that is to say—has passed, in the interval, through a phase of doubt and disquiet. It must be borne in mind that on the occasion to which we refer, although the greater part of the internal timber scaffolding was removed, the large central stack which had been erected to support the roof during the process of fixing was still in place. In fact, in the very centre of this stack was a platform on to which her Majesty was conducted; and this was the very best position for hearing in the entire amphitheatre. As this stack was removed, the glazing of the roof was carried on, so that when, at about the same period, the shell of the building was complete as to its ceiling, and was emptied of the scaffold, it was not easy to say how much of any change in the acoustic properties developed was due to either circumstance. So it was, however, that at that time a very unpleasant echo became perceptible. This echo varied in different parts of the building; it also varied, in a still more marked manner, with the musical instrument which produced the sound. This latter fact led us to anticipate the verification of the opinion of Colonel Scott, that the cause of the echo was the glass ceiling. Such instruments as had their mouths facing directly upwards had a repeat that might be traced clearly to this source. On the whole, the effect was much marred, the

auditors in some cases hearing at once a bar of music from the orchestra and the repeat of a former bar from the roof; but we felt it to be quite probable that the mischief might be cured. We have great pleasure in saying that this opinion has been, to a considerable extent, verified. In such parts of the hall as we could try, the bars ceased promptly and distinctly, without echo or reverberation. The destruction so far of the disturbing echo has been affected by the simple expedient of a velarium or tent-like roof, stretched over the area below the glass ceiling. We may observe in passing that this acoustic expedient has had a very happy architectural effect. It has almost entirely hidden from view the not wholly satisfactory lines of the glass ceiling. The tent-like structure and arrangement of this veil are appropriate and happy.—*Builder*.

There is a sea beach at Manchester, near Cape Ann, Massachusetts, which is remarkable for its "musical tone." As you step briskly over it, a distinct, and somewhat clear, shrill note is heard, which seems to be upon the key of C of the treble scale. By scraping or shuffling the foot over the sand the note may be prolonged, and it is loudest when the sand is driest. Hugh Miller mentions a similar phenomenon on a beach upon the coast of Scotland.—*Boston Journal*.

Richard Glover and Mary Ann Morel have won the two prizes offered by the promoters of the Alexandra Park and Palace scheme for the best essays on the means of making this institution a place of improving play to the toiling population of North London. Mr. Francis Fuller, to whom England is indebted for very much of the success of the first International Exhibition, and for the noble original plan of the Sydenham Palace, is the creator of the admirable series of projects for improving amusements which are comprehended in the bounds of the lovely play-place by Hornsey that will open with next summer's roses. On these projects Mr. Richard Glover has woven a most thoughtful and suggestive essay, which is well worth the attention of the educators who insist on the immense value of good play in the development of a child's mind; while Miss Morel has dwelt methodically on the popular educational advantages that will accrue from the carrying out of Mr. Fuller's proposals. "Play," we are told "is the first poetry of the human being." It is also the poetry of the toiling man—when it is properly presented to him. A representative of play, on a School Board, would not be its least useful member, and we should not be surprised if, one summer's day not far off in the future, the School Boards should be found sending up trains full of happy children to enjoy the delights of the Alexandra Park—its groves of noble oaks, its shady valleys, and emerald uplands. For the sake of the old and young of London, to whom play in fresh air is as yet an unknown luxury, we wish Mr. Fuller all the success which he deserves. That which he has done, however, amounts almost to a demonstration "that he will give London another beautiful recreation ground."—*School Board Chronicle*.

DANTE IN DUTCH.

A Dutch man of letters, Mr. Hacke van Mynden, has published a translation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. The Dutch are in raptures with the *terza rima*. The following specimen is from the *Inferno*, Canto 3, v. 19 to 30:—

"Toen vatte hij mijn hand, en wel tevreden
Zag hij mij aan, en schonk mij nieuwe krachten
Zoo daalden we in den afgrond naar beneden,
Waar zuchten, luide kreten jammerklachten,
Die duistre sterrelooze lichte doorboorden,
Zoodat ze mij tot droeve tranen brachten.
Vernengde talen, vreeselijke akkoorden,
Gescrei van smart en wanhoop van woede,
Met handgeklap en schelle of doffe woorden,
Verwekten een geweld, dat, nimmer moede,
In't rond draait in die eeuwige duistre luchten,
Als zand, gedreven door des stormwinds roede."

This is the first Dutch work on Dante. The Swedes have N. Lovén's version of the *Comedy in terza rima*, with copious notes, &c. The Russians have a prose version of the *Inferno* (with Flaxman's illustrations). The Hungarians have the *Vita Nuova*. The Spanish possess the oldest European translation of the *Inferno*—by Archidacon Villegas, in stanzas of eight verses, *de arte mayor*—four feet of unequal lengths. It was published in 1815, under the patronage of Queen Johanna. The last version of the *Comedy* in Latin (hexameters) was by the Abbé Della Piazza (1848); the introduction by Carl Witte, comprises also specimens of Latin, French, and Spanish versions. Of the other French and German translations the number is considerable. Teutonic languages seem to lend themselves with more ease than English to Dante's metre, supplying a larger proportion of paroxysm words suited to double rhymes.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

NOVELLO, EWER, & Co.—Verdi's opera, "Il Trovatore," 2nd edition.
 WALTER DICKS & Co.—Musical Treasures, No. 1—"Ma Normandie."
 WALKER & Co.—"Why, Colin, dost thou linger?" Song. By Arthur Skeay.
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DUETTINO.

Written by J. P. DOUGLAS.

Music by WALTER HAY.

O softly breathe the song again
 Whose music seems to me
 The whisper of an angel's voice,
 Or dream-like melody.
 How oft beneath the twilight stars
 In some sweet shaded dell,
 Our mingling voices woke that strain,
 The song we love so well.
 In hours when we no more may meet
 O breathe the witching strain,
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